

## The Tragedy of Hamlet

*Ophel.* Doe you doubt that?

*Laer.* For *Hamlet*, and the trifling of his favour,  
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood,  
A violet in the youth of prime nature,  
Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting,  
The perfume and suppliance of a minute:  
No more.

*Ophel.* No more but so.

*Laer.* Thinke it no more.

For nature cressant does not grow alone,  
In thewes and bulkes, but as this Temple waxes,  
The inward service of the mind and soule  
Growes wide withall: perhaps he loves you now,  
And now no soile nor cautell doth besmerch  
The vertue of his will; but you must feare  
His greatnesse wai'd, his will is not his owne.  
He may not, as unvalued persons doe,  
Crave for himselfe; for on his choice depends  
The safety and health of this whole state,  
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd  
Unto the voice and yeelding of that body  
Whereof he is the head: then if he saies he loves you,  
It fits your wisdom so far to beleeeve it,  
As he in his particular act and place  
May give his saying deed; which is no further  
Than the maine voice of *Denmarke* goes withall.  
Then weigh what losse your honour may sustaine,  
If with too credent eare you list his songs,  
Or loose your heart, or your chaste treasure open  
To his unmaistred importunitie.  
Feare it *Ophelia*, feare it my deare sister,  
And keep you in the reare of your affection,  
Out of the shot and danger of desire:  
"The chariest maid is prodigall enough,  
If she unmaske her beauty to the Moone:  
"Vertue it selfe scapes not calumnious strokes;  
"The canker galls the infant of the Spring  
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd,

And

## Prince of Denmarke.

And in the morne and liquid dew of youth  
Conragious blastments are most imminent.  
Be warie then, best safety lyes in feare,  
Youth to it selfe rebels though none else neere.

*Ophel.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,  
As watchmen to my heart: But good my brother  
Doe not as some ungracious Pastors doe,  
Shew me the steep and thorny way of heaven,  
Whiles a puffed and rechelesse Libertine,  
Himselfe the primrose path of dalliance treads,  
And reakes not his owne reed. *Enter Polonius.*

*Laer.* O feare me not;  
I stay too long: but here my father comes.  
A double blessing is a double grace,  
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

*Pol.* Yet here *Laertes*? aboard, aboard for shame,  
The winde sits in the shoulder of your saile,  
And you are staid for. There, my blessing with thee,  
And these few precepts in thy memory  
Look thou character: Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act:  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar:  
Those friends thou hast and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them unto thy soule with hoops of Steele,  
But doe not dull thy palme with entertainment  
Of each new hatcht, unfledg'd courage: beware  
Of entrance to a quartell, but being in,  
Bear't that th'opposer may beware of thee:  
Give every man thy care, but few thy voice; liw I ymagine  
Take each mans censure, but reserve thy judgement:  
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not exprest in fancy; rich, not gaudy;  
For the apparell oft proclaimes the man,  
And they in *France* of the best ranke and station,  
Are of a most select and generous, chiefe in that:  
Neither a borrower nor a lender boy,  
For love oft loses both it selfe and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.

C

This